

# The Adventure Continues

SPECIAL ALASKA EDITION

REBECCA ZAMORA | SPRING BREAK 2016

## ADVENTURE IS OUT THERE, AND WE FOUND IT

Ever since November of last semester, when my teammate, Andrew, first mentioned that he was planning a spring break mission trip to Alaska for students, I knew that the Lord intended me to go on this trip. I can't explain it; maybe it was my desire for adventure, or to see the beauty in God's creation up there. Whatever the reason, I was ready to do whatever it took to get there, and I'm glad I did!

My teammates Andrew, Brody, and I took a group of 16 students, ranging from freshmen to senior, from uninvolved at St. Lawrence to regulars at Gopher Catholic, up to Anchorage for a week of adventure and of serving Christ in the face of the poor and homeless in the city.

We served at two of the different homeless shelters run by Catholic Social Services in Anchorage: the Brother Francis Shelter, an emergency shelter for people wishing to transition out of homelessness, and the Clare House, a home for mothers and their children that need help getting back on their feet. Because of my love for kids and degree experience, I was at the Clare House for most of the week, and I am thankful for the opportunity to love on those little ones. It was so much fun seeing the students loosen up and just have fun with the kids! We also spent an afternoon walking the streets of Anchorage, having conversations with homeless people and sharing our lunches. Jesus was so present with us, and in them.



BRODY, MYSELF AND ANDREW. OR, IF YOU ASK THE STUDENTS, WE ARE DAD, MOM, AND GRANDPA.



THE GROUP EXPLORING MATANUSKA GLACIER. ONE OF THE COOLEST THINGS I HAVE EVER DONE!

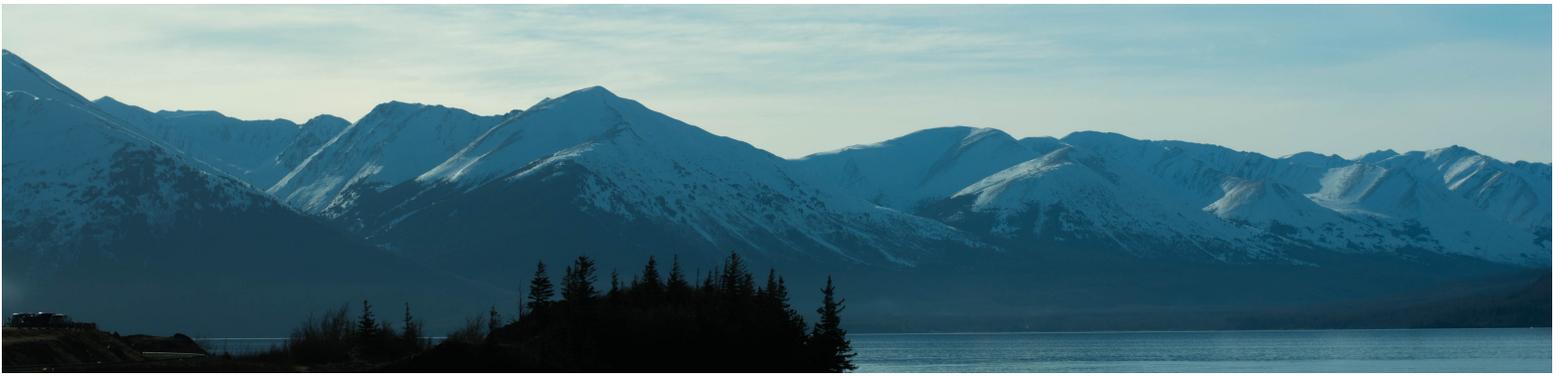


IN AN ICE CAVE ON MATANUSKA GLACIER. (!!!!)



This is a picture of myself & Maddie, one of the first freshman students I met this year. She came on this trip because going to Alaska was one of her dreams, but she gained so much more from it.

**"I was blessed to encounter the Lord on an entirely new level during the Alaska mission trip. Rather than simply "looking," He helped me begin "seeing" Earth's natural beauty through His eyes as a gift and the less fortunate as my brothers and sisters."**



SOME OF THE MOUNTAINS ALONG OLD SEWARD HIGHWAY, ONE OF THE MOST BEAUTIFUL DRIVES I'VE EVER BEEN ON!



THE WOMEN AND MYSELF AFTER OUR WALKING TOUR OF MATANUSKA GLACIER

Due to the scheduling nature of the shelters we volunteered at, we were only able to volunteer in the evenings. So during the day, we had time to explore the beauty surrounding us. We got to explore places like the Alaska Wildlife Conservation Center, Old Seward Highway, Matanuska Glacier, Flattop Mountain, and the Eagle River Mountain Pass. Now I can officially say that I have climbed a mountain, walked on a glacier, and seen a moose in the wild! We also met Archbishop Roger Schweitz of the Diocese of Anchorage, who was appointed a Bishop by St. John Paul II in 2001, and knew him personally. What a gift getting to hear stories about my favorite Saint from a man who actually knew him!

When we weren't adventuring around the city or serving the poor, we were back at our retreat center, enjoying fellowship with each other or participating in different prayer activities. Andrew was in seminary for 3 years before discerning out to pursue marriage (he and his wife were married in November and now have a baby on the way!), and he ended up giving a series of talks on different Church teachings - simply because the students asked to hear them. Their hunger and thirst for the Truth was inspiring, and many thoughtful discussions were had throughout the week.



THE WHOLE FAMILY TOGETHER AT EAGLE RIVER MOUNTAIN PASS

For me, one of the most striking things about the trip was the ease with which community was built and fostered. So many people that we met along the way during our various adventures were surprised to learn that the first time all 19 of us had been together was the night before we got on the plane to get to Anchorage. Every night we sat at one big table and had a family dinner, sharing our highs, lows, and "God moments" of the day. Some of my favorite memories of this trip are the joy and laughter shared during these times.

I am so, so, so overwhelmed with gratitude that I was chosen to help lead this trip. It changed my life in a lot of ways. Please pray for the students that were on this trip, that it may not be just a fond memory, but a foundation to build (or rebuild) their spiritual lives upon. To God be the glory!



CONTACT ME:  
1314 8th Street SE, Minneapolis, MN 55414  
(469)-556-2784  
rebecca.zamora@spoweb.org